

## City Investigating NYPD 311 Harassment Allegations After Streetsblog Report

By Jesse Coburn | Dec 21, 2021 | 8 COMMENTS



File art

The city has launched an investigation into harassment that 311 users said they faced after submitting illegal parking reports to the NYPD, ratcheting up the scrutiny of the police response to driver misconduct complaints.

A spokeswoman for the city's Department of Investigation confirmed late Friday that agency staffers were probing the allegations — two months after Streetsblog [reported](#) on them as part of a broader investigation into the police handling of 311 complaints. The spokeswoman did not provide further details about the city inquiry, which was first [reported](#) by The Atlantic last week.

Users of 311 told Streetsblog they've received barrages of phone calls in the middle of the night from blocked phone numbers after submitting reports about cars obstructing bike lanes, using dubious parking placards or flouting other traffic laws. Some anonymous callers left voicemails that contained only heavy breathing or a man repeating a 311 user's name over and over. The recipients said they believe it was cops trying to intimidate them into no longer filing complaints.

Another 311 user [received](#) an intimidating text message from an unidentified sender after Streetsblog [reported](#) on an insult-laced exchange he had with a city cop over his 311 complaints.



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Even Council Member Robert Holden (D-Queens) has said he's received 3 a.m. calls after filing 311 complaints — in his case from cops who identified themselves. He called the late-night calls “inappropriate,” and accused the NYPD of not taking the issue seriously.

Those allegations fit into a broader pattern of police neglect of 311 reports on illegal parking, chronically reckless driving and abandoned vehicles, Streetsblog found. This disregard has fostered a culture of lawlessness on city streets as traffic deaths climb to their highest point in years.

Streetsblog's investigation prompted demands from Mayor de Blasio and Council Member Ben Kallos (D-Manhattan) for the city to investigate the harassment allegations in particular.

“Whether [the harassing phone calls are] coming from a city employee or someplace else, it's not good,” the mayor said in October. “What we need to know is what happened in those cases.”

Evan Thies, a spokesman for incoming-Mayor Eric Adams, has not responded to requests for comment on Streetsblog's stories on the issue.

The City Council is also looking into the NYPD's handling of 311 complaints. Over the summer, cops ignored more than a dozen 311 complaints about illegal parking filed by Council investigators despite saying they had resolved them them. Council members rebuked the police over the issue at a hearing in October.

Police brass vowed at the hearing that the NYPD takes 311 seriously, but the department blew an October deadline to turn over relevant records to the Council, leading the lawmakers to issue a subpoena. A Council spokesperson told Streetsblog on Monday that “the NYPD has agreed to provide the subpoenaed materials” but did not answer other questions.

On Monday, Chong Bretillon, who said she received half-a-dozen intimidating, anonymous calls after filing 311 complaints, said she was glad the city is finally looking into the issue.

“This is good. I hope they get punished,” she said of the anonymous callers, who she suspects to be police officers. Those calls make “it plainly obvious that my concerns are not being taken seriously, that they're trying to intimidate me and just trying to discourage me from continuing to file these complaints,” she said.

The NYPD did not respond to a request for comment.



How Streetsblog covered the story.

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Filed Under: 311, Department of Investigation, NYPD, Parking Placards, Streetsblog Gets Action

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neroden

a year ago

NYPD's a crime gang. We have to get the state AG or one of the five NYC DAs to investigate seriously -- it's a Little RICO case.

0 0 • Reply • Share



BetsyK

a year ago

Reminder - if you use the 311 app to make reports, you can set it to report anonymously. I recently reported a car that was parked on a crosswalk blocking a disabled ramp for 2 days. Over the next 5 or so days, I reported it twice a day and the NYPD frauded the response each and every time, either saying they attended the scene and didn't see a violation or that they fixed the condition when they didn't. I got so pissed with their constant bullshit and lies that I called them a bunch of dumbasses in my final complaint. I guess that's when the anonymous setting is useful, lol. Anyway as a result of them refusing to do anything about this ramp-blocking car, the DOT couldn't finish painting the new crosswalk and so now we have a crosswalk which finishes 75% of the way across.

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Eve Kessler

BetsyK

a year ago

Send a photo

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BetsyK Eve Kessler

a year ago

I always include photos with the reports, as well as a very clear description of where the car is located.

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Bill Hussein O'Stalin

a year ago

Even the city council can't get respect from the police department. Time for a major change.

2 0 • Reply • Share



neroden

Bill Hussein O'Stalin

a year ago

Prosecute NYPD under Little RICO and send the entire crime gang to Sing Sing. That's what needs to happen.

0 0 • Reply • Share



thomas040

a year ago

They are talking about it like it's isolated incidents, when it's a symptom of systemic disease of moral hazard within the departments in question. We need to root out the bad, and get some transparency going. This has been going on for years.

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nyc-cynic

a year ago

Just my periodic reminder there are THREE DOZEN taxpayer supported agencies whose members can hand out pvb/dmv summonses, and yes, these include NYCT and MTA.

SHERWOOD\_000244



So there's absolutely NO excuse to let abusers parking in bus stops get away with it.

(And to be clear, these THREE DOZEN aren't lin ALSO ON STREETSLOG and out tickets for all the other issues, like "no standing" zones, unpaid parking meters, expired



## Mayor Vows to Investigate Alleged Harassment of 311 Users After Recent Streetsblog Investigation

By Jesse Coburn | Oct 28, 2021

"Whether [such calls are] coming from a city employee or someplace else, it's not good," the mayor said when asked about the alleged harassment. "What we need to know is what happened in those cases."

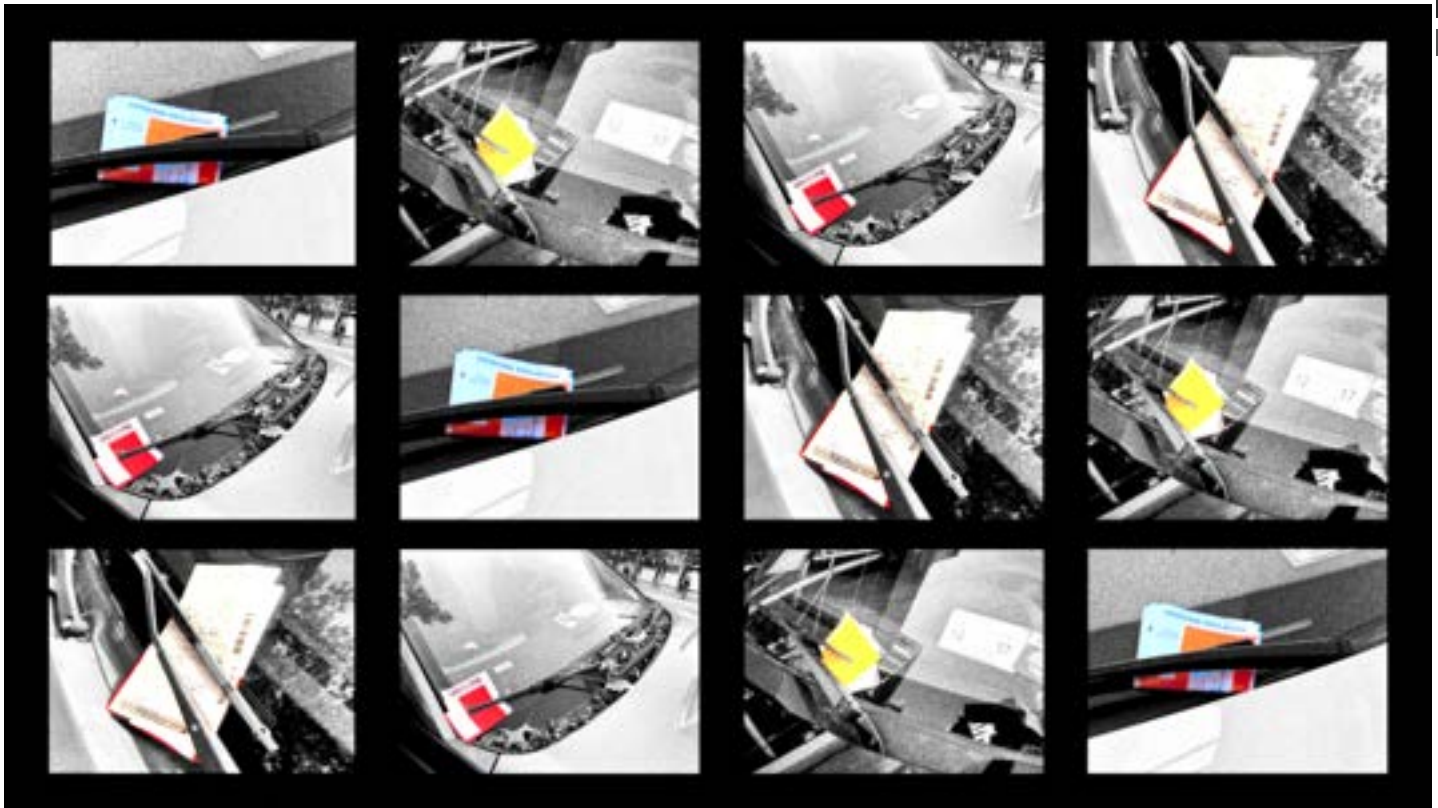


## Council Member Calls For Probe of Alleged 311 Harassment

SHERWOOD\_000245

By Jesse Coburn | Oct 26, 2021

And meanwhile, Council Member Bob Holden told Streetsblog he has also been the victim of "inappropriate" calls from cops.



## Are Cops Writing the Tickets They Say They Are Following 311 Complaints?

By Jesse Coburn | Nov 24, 2021

The NYPD rarely reports ticketing drivers in response to 311 complaints about blocked bike lanes, city data shows. But a new Streetsblog analysis raises doubts whether officers are even writing the tickets that they say they are.





## Tipster Sues NYPD for Harassment Over 311 Complaints about Illegal Parking

By Julianne Cuba | Jan 23, 2023

The once anonymous tipster who alleged that members of the NYPD had harassed and threatened him after he reported the cops for illegal parking has now publicly filed a lawsuit in federal court against the NYPD and the city for violating his First Amendment rights.





## NYPD Ignores Council Request for Info on Allegedly Fraudulent 311 Responses

By Jesse Coburn | Oct 25, 2021

Council leaders had asked the NYPD to provide materials related to 14 311 service requests about illegal parking that police officers had marked as resolved despite never responding to the scenes of the infractions, according to council investigators.



### Amid Multiple Investigations, NYPD Defends Its 311 Response at Council Hearing

By Jesse Coburn | Oct 27, 2021

City Council members voiced frustration with the NYPD's handling of 311 complaints about illegal parking at a hearing Tuesday, but police officials defended the department's efforts.

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